

REMARKS

This Amendment and Response is responsive to the Final Office Action mailed December 22, 2003. In that Action: claims 10-38 were pending; claims 23, 24, 29, and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Huang et al. (USPN 5,467,146); claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Huang in view of Aho et al. (USPN 4,874,228); claims 26-28 and 31-35 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but noted as allowable if rewritten into independent form; and claims 10-22 and 36-38 were allowed.

It is again noted that the Karasawa reference (USPN 5,278,680) first cited by the Examiner in the 6-23-03 Office Action was not listed on the PTO-892 Notice of References Cited form. Correction was requested in our 9-23-03 Amendment and Response and is again hereby requested. Also, a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement was provided with the 9-23-03 Amendment and Response and a copy of the PTO-1449 filed therewith has not been returned with Examiner's Initials. Lastly, the Examiner telephoned the undersigned on 11-5-03 to discuss a new reference the Examiner had found (Rhoads et al.; USPN 5,627,672). This reference was discussed and it was determined that the claims were clearly distinguishable over that reference. It is also requested that this reference be cited in a PTO-892.

Rejected independent claims 23 and 30 and dependent claims 24, 25, and 29 have been canceled. The only claims remaining in this case are those that were previously allowed or merely objected to as depending from a rejected base claim. Claims 26, 31, and 32 have been amended into independent form, so as not to depend on a rejected base claim. These three claims, along with further dependent claims 27, 28, and 33-35, were previously objected to. Reconsideration of the claim objections is hereby requested.

Based on the foregoing comments, Applicants believe that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and such disposition is respectfully requested. In the event that a telephone conversation would further prosecute and/or expedite allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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